



## **Enrolment and Admission Policy**

### **Introduction**

The Board of Management of Caheragh National School hereby sets out its Enrolment and Admission Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000 and the Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal Teacher will be happy to clarify any matters arising from this policy.

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school.

### **General School Information**

**Name of School: Caheragh National School**  
**Telephone No. (028) 31647**  
**E-mail: caheraghns@gmail.com**

Founded in 1977, Caheragh National School is a Roman Catholic co-educational primary school under the patronage of Bishop Gavin, the Bishop of Cork and Ross.

As a Roman Catholic School, Caheragh National School aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all pupils cognitively, intellectually, physically, culturally, morally and spiritually. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, children of all faiths are welcome to attend Caheragh N.S. The full range of classes is taught in the school, from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, and classes are of mixed gender. It is an inclusive school and caters for all children of all abilities.

At present, the teaching staff is comprised of 3 class Teachers (1 being a Teaching-Principal), 1 full time Special Education Teacher and 2 Special Needs Assistants.

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and it operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. The school Policy has regard to the resources and funding available.

Class starts at 9.20 a.m. and finishes at 3.00 p.m. Infant Classes finish at 2.00 p.m.

### **Our Vision**

Our vision is to develop knowledge and character in every pupil empowering them to meet, with assured confidence, the challenges of life now and in the future.

### **Our Mission**

Caheragh National School is committed to the aims and principles of the revised 1999 Primary Schools' Curriculum. We celebrate the uniqueness of each child as expressed in each child's personality, intelligence and potential for development. We aim to nurture each pupil in all dimensions of their life - spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical.



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We strive to cherish and challenge our students in a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment.

As a Christian community we aim to be a warm and welcoming place respectful and accommodating of diversity in race, culture, religion, gender and ability. We aim to promote equality and support pupils with special educational needs.

We are an integral part of the parish of Caheragh and in partnership with parents and the Church we aim to nurture the Catholic faith through religious education, preparation for the sacraments and through our school ethos.

We are a learning community; promoting, modelling and valuing life-long learning.

Parents are their children's primary educators and we strive to empower and utilise parents to be actively involved in their child's education and the life of our school.

We value our relationship with our local community and actively promote our pupils' and their families' involvement in their community.

We strive to provide a nurturing, positive, holistic learning experience for every pupil and commit our resources to challenging and empowering each other.

## **Rationale**

This policy aims to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school

- To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with the Ethos, the mission Statement of the school and legislative requirements
- To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it and
- To put in place a framework which will ensure effective and productive relations between students, parents and teachers where a student is admitted to the school

## **Legal Framework**

Section 9 (j) of the Education Act 1998 specifies, that "A recognized school shall ....Subject to this Act and in particular section 15 (2) (d), establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school".

Section 15 (2) (d) states the Board of Management shall "publish .... The policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice are respected".

Section 27 (1) states that "A board shall establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students in a school of the activities of the school" and (2) that "the procedures established and maintained under subsection (1) shall facilitate the involvement of the students in the operation of the School having regard to the age and experience of the students, in association with their parents and teachers".



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The Education Welfare Act, 2000 [Section 19 (1)] requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the school's Admission Policy. Section 19 (2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management, shall as soon as possible (but no later than 21 days) after receiving such information "make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof"

The Equal Status Act, 2000 [Sections 5 & 7 (2)] prohibits discrimination on the grounds of "gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community" regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction. There are limited exceptions regarding single-sex schools and schools promoting particular religious values [Section 7 (3)].

## **Goals**

The school shall have in place appropriate channels of communication and procedures

- To inform parents about the school, its programmes, activities, and procedures
- To enable applications for admission to the school to be handled in an open, transparent manner
- To put in place criteria under which applications shall be considered
- To ensure that these criteria are informed by our Ethos, our Mission Statement & current legislation
- To specify what information is required by the school at the time of application

## **Context, Resources, School Organisation & Curriculum**

The school supports the principle of equality for all students regarding access to and participation in the school. The school respects the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society. The school acknowledges the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parent's choice, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of any applicant or student. It will make every effort to secure those resources – where the resources cannot be secured the school may refuse admission. The school is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil – teacher ratios (26:1) sanctioned by the Department and any additional teaching hours sanctioned by the Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes etc. The school operates within the regulations laid down by the Department from time to time.

The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extra-curricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its activities and programme for any school year the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it.



## **Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy:**

### **Roles of Board of Management**

- To ensure that a policy is in place and that it is reviewed
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementations and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.
- To decide on appeals by parents or students with respect to any decision(s) made by the Principal/Board.
- To prepare (and submit to TUSLA) a statement of Strategies regarding Attendance. The Statement of Strategy will have regard to guidelines issued by TUSLA and will set out the measures the Board of Management proposes to adopt
  - a) For the purposes of fostering and appreciation of learning among students attending the school and
  - b) Encouraging regular attendance at the school on the part of all students

### **Role of the Principal**

- To formulate draft policy in consultation with the teaching staff, students, parents, Board and Trustees
- To monitor its implementation and to ensure that it is reviewed by the review date
- To implement the policy and to support other teaching staff in their implementation of the policy
- To apply for and acquire such resources as are available in accordance with government policies
- To ensure, within the constraints of available resources, that alternative programmes are devised where necessary and practicable to meet the needs of students
- To appraise the policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate
- To ensure a register of all students attending the school is established and maintained
- To ensure that a record of attendance or non-attendance is maintained for each student registered at this school and, in the case of non-attendance, the reason for same
- Prior to registering a child, to provide the parents of an applicant with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and ensure that the parent confirm in writing their acceptance of the Code and an assurance that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by the child
- To provide, on request, to any parent of a child registered in the school with a copy of the Code of Behaviour
- Where a child is refused admission, to advise the parents of their right of appeal to the Trustees and the Department of Education setting out Title and Address of each and advising of time limits



### **Role of Teaching staff**

- To co-operate with the implementation of this policy
- To take the needs of all students into account in the way in which they select textbooks, plan and teach their lessons and conduct assessments
- To bring concerns about Special Needs curricular matters and information to the attention of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Special Education Teacher, Special Needs Assistant
- To keep parents informed through the regular Parent / Teacher Meetings and School Reports and by meeting parents from time to time as required.
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

### **Role of Students**

- To co-operate fully with the school in the implementations of the policy
- To offer suggestions for improving the service to students with special needs

### **Role of Parents**

- To support the policy and to co-operate fully with the school in its implementation
- To bring to the attention of the school authorities any concern they may have in relation to the school's provision for the educational needs of their child
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implantation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

### **Policy Considerations**

The Board of Management of Caheragh National School reserves the right of admission if such admissions contravene Departmental guidelines on class size, etc.

The school will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, special education needs, disability, traveller status, refugee status, political or religious beliefs, family or social circumstances, provided the necessary supports are in place in the school. Reference to Caheragh Parish in our criteria for enrolment is used for the purposes of geographic location when determining an applicant's address' proximity to the school.

The school will maintain a list of refused applicants for each class, their place on that list having been determined under the criteria outlined.

The Board of Management respects parental choice in relation to enrolment, provided the enrolment criteria are fulfilled.

The Board of Management of Caheragh National School, in its Policy of Admissions/Enrolment, respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. Consequently, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class, bearing in mind:



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- Health & Safety Concerns regarding Staff and Children
- Available classroom space
- Multi-grade classes
- Educational needs of the children
- Presence of children with special needs
- Department of Education & Skills class size directives
- Appropriate Supports and Resources are available
- Time of school year

### **Children of other faiths or no faith**

Bearing in mind the Catholic ethos of the school, every effort will be made so that the school is as inclusive as possible. While Catholic education and the ethos of the school permeates the day, children of other faiths or none, **where request is made in writing**, will be excused from participation in formal religious instruction classes and specifically Catholic liturgies. As far as is possible, in consultation with parents, suitable alternative arrangements will be made in order to facilitate this. It will not be possible however to provide religious instruction in other faiths.

### **Children with additional needs**

Caheragh National School will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Caheragh National School will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b) of the Education (Provision in Respect of Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022.

### **Procedures – Application, Enrolment Criteria & Decision / Appeals**

- Failure to fully complete forms may result in refusal to admit a student.
- Further relevant information may be sought at a later stage
- In applying the criteria for enrolment, the school will take into account Gender Balance Male / Female and limitations in the size of classes

Admission to the school is, of course, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources, and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission. Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant or student, it will make every effort to secure those resources-where the resources cannot be secured, the school reserves the unfettered right to refuse admission. It is the responsibility of parents / guardians of any child to inform the school of any such needs on the enrolment application form for the child's own welfare.

The Board of Management may request copies of relevant reports or request that the child be assessed immediately in order to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child and to profile the support services required. The Board of Management will endeavour to have all resources and supports in place



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before the child is admitted to the school. This may include visiting teacher service, resource teacher, special needs assistant etc., specialised equipment or furniture, transport services etc.

The school will meet with the parents of the child with additional needs to discuss the school's suitability for the child. If considered necessary, a full case conference may be called which will include parents, class teacher, special education teacher and any outside professionals (psychologist/occupational therapist/speech and language therapist/social worker/case worker etc.) as may be appropriate. In this context the school authorities will have equal regard for the welfare of all the students and their right to an education in an atmosphere that is not detrimental to their physical, emotional, moral, social or intellectual development. Failure to fully complete the application form, failure to supply any relevant information requested by the school or failure to make reasonable arrangements to meet with the school authorities to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

### **Application for immediate admission in the current school year**

- Application forms are available from the school secretary and/or principal
- Failure to fully complete forms may result in refusal to admit the applicant
- The behaviour record of a student in their previous school shall be considered
- The attendance record of a student in their previous school shall be considered

### **Junior Infant Enrolment Procedure**

Application forms are available from the school secretary/principal. The registration process is initiated on receipt by the school of a completed application form. This form must be signed and dated by one or both parents or guardians. The form will be date stamped on receipt by the school, and is attached as appendix 1 to this policy. Telephone calls or personal school visits concerning enrolment will be facilitated, but are not in themselves enrolment applications. Parents must also include an original birth/adoptions certificate which the school will take a photocopy of, before returning it to the parent/guardian. An enrolment/registration session will be held in February of each year. Parents of children enrolling in Junior Infants will be invited to bring their children to the school for an informal period on a day to be decided by the principal and class teacher.

- Children will be enrolled on application, provided that there is space available.
- Junior Infants are enrolled in September provided the child has reached their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday by April of the previous year.
- Normally, Junior Infants will not be enrolled during the year unless transferring from another school. This is for educational reasons as the curriculum is progressive and it is necessary for the child to complete a full year.
- Decisions in relation to application for enrolment are made by the Board of Management.
- Parents will be informed of acceptance of the child as soon as possible.
- No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, gender, traveller status, asylum-



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seeker/refugee status, religious/political beliefs and values or family or social circumstances.

- The completion of an enrolment form or the placement of your child's name on a list, however early, does not confer an automatic right to a place in the school.

### Junior Infant Enrolment Criteria

If the number of children on the Waiting List exceeds the number of places available, the following prioritising criteria are used:

Priority	Criterion
1	Priority is given to brothers and sisters (including step-siblings, resident at the same address) of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past. If the class is over subscribed on the basis of this criterion, then places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.
2	Families whose primary residence is in the immediate areas of Caheragh Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school within the Parish
3	Children of current teaching staff.
4	Children of parents who are past pupils of the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this particular criterion, then those whose primary residence is furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
5	If space is still available, class numbers are completed from the Waiting List, which is compiled and ordered according to the date of the original application. The criteria are listed in order of priority when spaces are allocated under criterion 1 and space is still available, then criterion 2 comes into play and so on. This prioritization proceeds until all places have been allocated.

### Criteria for Enrolment to SI to 6<sup>m</sup> Classes

The following criteria will be applied if there is a surplus of applications for available places in the Senior Infants to 6 classes.

Priority	Criterion
1	Priority is given to brothers and sisters (this includes step-siblings residing at the same address) of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past.





2	Families whose primary residence is in the immediate areas of Caheragh Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school within the Parish.
3	Children of current teaching staff.
4	Children of parents who are past pupils of the school.

All children enrolled are expected to comply with and support the school's Code of Behaviour, as well as the school's designated policies on Curriculum, Organisation and Management.

### **Evaluation**

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of the Policy and review and amend the Policy as required, with particular emphasis placed upon

- Effective management placed on application process
- Clarity and transparency relating to the process
- Applicants informed in good time re the status of their application, particularly in the case of refusal to enrol
- Positive Parental feedback

### **Monitoring Procedures**

The implementations of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management at the appropriate time. It will also be referred by the Principal for consideration by the full staff at the same time. The Principal will report to the Board of Management regarding the process of enrolment in December each year and regularly thereafter until enrolment is complete. Where the Principal refuses admission to any applicant, by the authority delegated to him/her by the Board in line with this policy, any such refusal shall be communicated to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

### **Appeals Procedure**

In line with Section 28 of the Education Act 1998, parents who are dissatisfied with an enrolment decision, may appeal to the Board of Management. This appeal must be addressed, in writing, to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal, and lodged within ten days of receiving the refusal. Parents, if unhappy with the result of this appeal, may appeal to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 on the official form drawn up by the Department. An appeal form will be issued by the school to the parents/guardians. This appeal must be lodged with 42 days of receipt of the refusal from the school to enroll.

### **Review Procedure**



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The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every five years. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible. This policy was reviewed in 2016, again in 2019 and will be reviewed again before or during the school year 2022/23.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_